



**TROOPERS**  
**IN**  
**FRANCE**

**Robert E. Anderson**



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by  
Robert T. Anderson

I've dug up this lot from my kit-bag,  
Old memories of days "Out There",  
If there's interest for old time comrades  
That's all that I really care.

These few have eluded the Censor,  
The Critic they may not evade—  
But if they reach Pals in hospital wards,  
I'll feel that I'm more than repaid.

Here's to you, old pals, who still suffer,  
And should they but bring you a smile,  
Or lighten one hour when you're lonely,  
I'll know that my verse is worth while.





Robert T. Anderson

# Troopers in France

by

ROBERT T. ANDERSON

Author of "The Old Timer and Other Poems"  
"Canadian Born and Other Western Verse", etc.

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(Note. — In reading certain French words occurring in this book, which should be printed with an aspirate as "lavé", "pavé", etc., the pronunciation should be given like "lavvy" and "pavvy".)

## TO J. B. L. CLAXTON, ESQ.

(For Zero Hour, February 11th)

Sergeant Major, we were with you in the days of  
long ago,  
When we did some rough campaigning in the mud  
and in the snow,  
And 'twill take some more depression than a drop  
to ten below  
To hold us when the Muster Roll is calling.  
From the right—Number.

There's some are not so active as they were on old  
parades,  
With quite acute reminders in their backs and  
shoulder-blades  
But we'll all swing into action without any call for  
Aids,  
And be ready when the Muster Roll is calling  
Eyes right—Dress.

It's good to have old Memories that will cling while  
life shall last  
(So much of life is slipping that we fain would  
hold them fast)



And to see familiar faces of the comrades of the  
past,

Who will rally when the Muster Roll is calling.

Troops—SHUN.

We've answered, Sergt.-Major, all attention to the  
eyes,

We're glad to meet our Officers and have them  
fraternize,

And we'll gather on Parade Ground till the last old  
trooper dies,

To answer when the Muster Roll is calling.

Half Sections, Right—Walk—March.

Oh, lift your game old feet up, and forget they  
want to lag;

The Cook-House Call is sounding, and our tongues  
begin to wag,

(And overlook a comrade if he totes a friendly jag,  
For, after all, the Muster Call has sounded).

To the halt—Form Troop.



**MOTHERLAND**

We hold our strength for Britain;  
Yea, now at the Mother's call,  
Having asked us lately for little,  
She shall find us proffer our all,  
There are strong men born on the prairies,  
There are hard men bred of the hills  
Speak, Old Mother of Empire,  
For one are thy children's wills.

Out of the dust of the cities;  
Fresh from the lure of the trail;  
Keen from the breath of the mountains,  
Thy young men shall not fail.  
Our pride is the pride of our fathers;  
Our hope in thy charge of the seas;  
See, we are here in our thousands,  
Ye have only to choose from these.

Ye lay no stress on the clamor  
Of crowds bombastic and vain,

Words that are honeyed or servile,  
Or boasts that are born of the brain,  
But ye ask for our hearts, old Britain,  
And we render our strength as it came;  
Lo, here are multiplied talents  
That never were hoarded in shame.

Ever the fore-front of battle  
Has known our breed to be there,  
Ever the frontier has called us,  
Where there were hardships to bear,  
Have we kept back from the dangers?  
Have we avoided the fray?  
Nay, or our Mother's reliance,  
Had not been on us today.

Ye shall have toll of our legions  
Raised on the threshold of war;  
Those that are new to the struggle  
Shall be as the bravest ye bore,  
Only we will to be Britons,  
Not to be guarded alone—  
But that the might of our new lands  
Straight may encircle the throne.



Scots with their wealth of traditions,  
Wealth that no tongue can traduce,  
Men of the blood of the Angles  
Weary of bidding a truce;  
Hot blood of Erin forever,  
Welsh that are true to the core;  
Mother, our blood shall be given,  
Say, can you ask of us more?

Aye, and with pride we can say it,  
Here in the ranks by our side  
Are men, whose ancestors, in battle  
Against our own people have died,  
No more shall Sebastopol vex us,  
And Waterloo's glory descends,  
For they who have ranked as our foemen  
Are worthy to stand as our friends.

Mother, ask of thy millions;  
Straightway thy sons obey.  
Out on the veldt or the prairie  
Men will be hastening away.  
Never a land thou hast peopled  
But willingly gives of its best,  
And here, in our Canada, Mother,  
Are waiting thy men of the West.

August 6, 1914.

## FAREWELL TO CANADA

Farewell, Farewell to Canada

We're out across the seas,

We've looked our last at Canada:

We sniff the ocean breeze;

There's some will sniff the cannon's breath,

The shell will burst for some,

But we'll do our best for Canada

Whatever else may come.

Then let the war notes clarion forth;

The brazen trumpet sound,

We'll all be proud of Canada

Wherever we are bound.

The Homeland, The Homeland,

The far spread towns we know;

The broad Dominion claims us yet,

Wherever else we go.

Oh! welcome to the outer seas

That Britain's might retains,

For madly yet the British blood



Goes coursing thro' our veins;  
The hot blood surging strongly now  
May ebb on sodden field,  
But hope our lov'd ones placed in us  
They never yet must yield.

We are the boys of Canada  
From mountain and from plain;  
They'll miss us from the ranges now,  
And from the garnered grain,  
And many a bright eye will be dim  
And many a heart be sore,  
For a soldier boy in Khaki  
Who has turned his face to war;

By rugged Illicilliwaet  
The Grizzly now may roam;  
In Koot'nay's wilds, the black-tailed deer  
May rest himself at home,  
By Athabasca's winding course  
The Moose may challenge long,  
For the hunter lads are marching  
Where the German legions throng.

Farewell, farewell to Canada  
    'Till none can answer when,  
But 'till a brighter day hath dawned  
    And peace hath come again;  
Then, when our rifles may be mute  
    And Britain's wards be free,  
We'll turn our face to Canada  
    Across the leagues of sea.

October 12, 1914 (On Board R.M.S.P. Arcadian)



## WHEN THE CANADA BOYS GET THERE

Oh, the Unter den Linden is a very pleasant drive,  
And they brew good beer in Berlin,  
And the troops of the Kaiser, they are very much  
alive,

But they'll have to let the bulldogs in,  
For you can't get away from the bulldog breed,  
And they'll scent Wienerwurst anywhere,  
But just keep a little of the scraps that are left  
Till the Johnny Canucks get there.

Chorus:

For we didn't come all the way across the sea,  
For the lovely little trip all alone,  
Without some small desire to go and face the fire.  
And raise a little rumpus of our own.

Old Kaiser Will der Grosser is a very funny man,  
With his brass-potted soldiers all a-row,  
But the boys out of Canada are coming all they can,  
And they had to let the bulldogs go,  
They are coming away out of Valcartier,  
And they haven't drained the old land bare,  
But don't whip the Germans any more than you can  
help  
Till Canada's sons get there.



Now, nobody thinks for a minute and a half

We are out on a picnic or a spree,  
But the boys that left Canada with cheery song and  
laugh.

Will go singing on the road to Germanee,  
Double, double, double, for we all want trouble,  
And we all smell trouble in the air,  
And just keep a little what the Kaiser's going to get  
Till Sam Hughes' boys get there.

Cheer up, Uncle Billy, for you'll very soon be dead,  
And the house of Hohenzollern on the bum,  
But the road to der Vaterland is lying straight  
ahead,

And there's plenty more Canadians to come,  
For you may throw a brag at the old red rag  
But you can't turn it into a scare,  
And you'd best keep a-running for the old home  
town

When the Canada boys get there.

On Board R.M.S.P. Arcadian, 12-10-14.



## THE OLD NINETEENTH.

Come all you men of the 19th Drags,  
Who fought in France under umpteen flags;  
When Danger calls, then nobody lags  
    'Mong the Men of the old Nineteenth.

Come muster in, O, come muster in,  
For now is the time we must all begin  
To look about for our next-of-kin—  
    The boys of the old Nineteenth.

They picked them out of the best there were,  
And sent them off with a Devil-may-care;  
When they wanted men they were always there—  
    The lads of the old Nineteenth.

When the Frenchmen saw them upon the go  
They thought they were part of the Wild West  
    Show,  
And shouted for "Parapluie Chapeaux":\*  
    They wore in the old Nineteenth.

When the Sergeants called, they were right in line.  
And a good rum-ration would go down fine,  
For very few of the bucks decline  
    In the ranks of the old Nineteenth.

They knew every farmer along the way  
By the Belgian front and the Pas-de-Calais  
And they peeked into every Estaminet  
Did the men of the bold Nineteenth.

When they were sipping the bon bon biere,  
The rosy vin-rouge, and the vin-blanc clear,  
They wished that la Guerre run its twenty-fifth  
year—

The men of the gay Nineteenth.

Gay young Lotharios rode near and far,  
And Tony the Mexican thumbed his guitar,  
So the Mamselles are wondering whereabouts are  
Les troupes a' cheval—the Ninteenth.

In Lillers and Bailleul the folk knew them well,  
In Ploegsteert, in Arras, and grim La Boiselle,  
And the Allemands knew them when fighting like—  
well—

The men of the bold Nineteenth.

When beaucoup zigzag, (having francs and to  
spare)

They could steer their chevaux with a soldierly air,  
And they helped to settle up Wilhelm's affair,  
Did the men of the old Nineteenth.

O, what are we waiting for, you and I?  
We're waiting for someone to notice we're dry.  
A slight touch of Cognac to drink a health by  
To Soldats au Guerre—the Nineteenth.

Come, fill once again—To the Colonels we knew.  
Likewise to the Troopers, there still are a few;  
When the next war occurs, may we wave an adieu  
To the boys of the New Nineteenth.

\* Umbrella Hats.

## EPITAPHS IN BAILLEUL CEMETERY

Epitaphs in Bailleul Cemetery for two comrades  
who died early in the war.

### I

In face of all who were our Empire's foes  
He wished to play his part, and as he fell  
He proved his manhood, for in dying well  
He gave his all for all that freedom knows.

### II

Comrade-in-war, in peace we leave you here,  
'Mid other Britons who have gone before.  
A friend to Peace, an enemy to Fear,  
You found peace only, thro' the ways of War.

## ALLIES

I've seen all shades of color since I sailed across the  
Drink,

The blackest brand of Sengalese, the brownest shade  
of Chink,

The Japonaise (Canadian) with eyes so much aslant  
And little Gurks with lengthy knives and trousers  
wide but scant;

The Bengalese with piercing eyes, and lances long  
and keen

And many tribes of lesser folk who come upon the  
scene,

I've looked upon the lean Zouave, in baggy breeks  
of red,

So picturesque in broidered vest, with fez upon his  
head.

We've hob-nobbed with the Spahis too, who ride  
the desert sands,

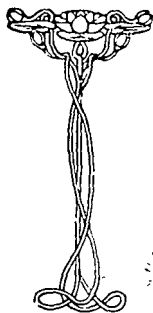
And spoken with a'lot of men from queer out-  
landish lands

The Portuguese so seldom shaved—with trousers  
skimp and spare.



And Belges in their tasselled caps and Gens  
d'Armerie air  
We've seen 'em all, we've looked 'em o'er—both  
officers and bucks,  
And we haven't seen an outfit yet we'd swap for  
our Canucks.

July 16, 1917.



**"THE OLDEST ALLIES IN EUROPE"**

(Scotland-France 1295-1915)

Here in the low lands of Flanders  
When Bourbon or Guise held power,  
Came many a lanky Scots lad  
From many a northern tower,  
With purse that was sore depleted,  
But sword that his arm could swing;  
O! so came our soldiers of fortune  
When Louis Quatorze was king.

And here with the lazy barges  
Asleep in the dull canal,  
And the tall, trim trees a-standing  
As Dutch trees ever shall;  
The horse-ponds willow-bordered,  
And the hop-poles long and spare,  
He stayed—but he dreamed of the heather  
That scented the Highland air.

He thought of the mountain passes  
When the grey mist wrapt them in gloom;  
He thought of the shaggy cattle  
That stood knee-deep in the broom;  
He saw the blue wreath curling  
From the cot by the dashing stream

But he woke to the Flemish farmsteads  
And a folk that never dream.

And now we have come to the places  
Our Scots lads knew in their day;  
The same old windmills are standing,  
The same old shrines by the way;  
We clatter our horse by the causeway,  
Old arches resound to the clang,  
The half-timid burger at daylight  
But glimpses the troop as we gang.

O! here we are riding in Flanders  
Where the diced-band often has been—  
The roadways are thronged with soldiers,  
And many a one of our kin,  
The kilts swing by to the pibroch  
Thro' the white dust of the road,  
They gang to the trench light-hearted,  
As brisk as their fathers strode.

Yet each one thinks of the braeside  
His earliest years had kent,  
And each has thought for his own lass  
And places where oft they went;  
And each has a pride in his own heart—  
A pride that's no useless thing.

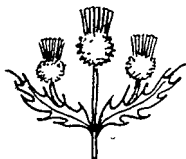


That he stands as stout soldier as any  
When Louis Quatorze was king.

When our lads came in the old days  
They fought for the pillage and pay,  
They rendered their swords to the war lords—  
For men who were richer than they,  
But ours that have come into Flanders  
Come not for plunder or gain,  
But as a bulwark to freedom,  
So shall they ever remain.

The Frank, as he turns to the battle  
And seesthe long lines oppose,  
Can mind of the Prussian invasion  
When his land was trodden by foes,  
But his confidence comes with the long lines  
Of dusty, khaki-clad men,  
For the "Oldest Allies" in Europe  
Are now together again.

France, April, 1915.



## ENCOURAGEMENT

It's me that was a soldier  
Afore the year was out  
With their shouting and their cussin'  
An'-a-chasin' round about.  
I've crawled whole miles of dusty fields  
An' floundered in the mud;  
But the Sergeant only spoke of me  
As something of a Dud.

Says the Sergeant to the rookies  
As was drillin' in the sun,  
"Gor' blimy, wot they'll send us  
For to make the Jerry's run;  
Now keep your bloomin' shoulders straight  
An pull that belly in—  
O Lor' but this is penance  
'as been sent me for my sin."

Says the Sergeant to us rookies  
As was runnin' round the square  
"I'm goin' to make you soldiers  
If you've got the guts to spare.  
Now keep your blasted heads erect  
An' grip your rifles strong—  
Oh Lord, the Kaiser will be glad  
We've brought this bunch along."

When we was doin' bayonet drill  
An' chargin' sacks of straw,  
The sargeant said sarcastic things  
That kind of made us raw,  
Said he, "Now, mind them sacks is Huns  
An' take this trench by storm,  
Oh Lord, won't George V Rex shed tears  
To see this mob perform."

It's left-right 'round the drill hall,  
An' 'alt, an' don't forget,  
You bloody bunch of raw recruits  
I'll make you soldiers yet,  
You keep your rifles at the slope  
An' dress up by the right  
Now, won't them Proosian Guards be pleased  
When you comes in the fight?"

They fed us on Slumgullion,  
An' Tickler's jam and cheese  
Till we were ready for the line  
An' service overseas,  
Then as we heard the big guns pound,  
Our hearts were poundin', so  
We sang as on route marches  
"Are we down hearted—NO?"



Now we was in the melee

An' the sergeant copped it fair

An' as we wiped his bleedin' mouth

An' seen him gasp for air

He faltered out, "I've drill'd recruits

An' heaps of 'em's been kill'd

But this last batch of barstards

Were the best I ever drilled!"



## AT YPRES

BENTLEY'S SON 10

Yes, we have faced the German lines with all a  
Briton's scorn,

And we have seen the powder smoke roll back  
across the morn;

Have breathed the cruel, reeking gas that brings  
the strongest low,

But we have clenched the musket-butt and grappled  
with the foe.

For o'er the serried heaps of dead in khaki, blue  
and gray,

We saw the German helmet spikes, and maddened  
for the fray,

Right up against their battle front we slashed our  
bayonets thro',

And then we thought of Canada and every thrust  
was true.

For not a mongrel breed are we, tho' of old races  
blent;

Our pride is love of liberty and not our long  
descent,

We came not out of Canada for pillage or for pay—

But God be with the foeman bold who dares to bar  
our way.



No "lion cubs" men recked us then, as, all unused  
to war,  
They turned us lose on Sals'bry Plain to see the  
Winter o'er,  
And we have waited weary months for just such  
chance to come;  
Cheer now, tho' many a comrade's voice for ever-  
more is dumb.

When once the weary soldiers rest between the  
burst of shell,  
We'll creep across those gory heaps and view this  
man-made Hell.  
These—that were comrades yesterday—we have a  
trench for them,  
God "strafe" those who made the war; He amply  
shall condemn.

Poor mangled flesh of friend and foe in one long,  
shallow grave,  
These died with curses on the lip when none had  
power to save;  
Their Landwehr fell in bleeding droves that one  
King's power should be;  
We came that Britain's plighted word should hold  
by land and sea.

Now answer to the muster rolls; Oh God! how few  
there stand,  
These regiments out of Canada with few to give  
command,  
We've helped to hold the Ypres front we'll hold  
them back again,  
But ah! there's many a weary heart for our Canadian  
men.

Flanders 6-5-15 (After the Second Battle of Ypres)



**SOLDIERIN'**

I ran into the Corp'ral as I cross'd the billet yard,  
The Corporal turned round about and looked at  
me quite hard

Said he, "You'll have your buttons shined, for to-  
night you'll be on guard."

An' that's what it is to be a soldier.

I'd just been doin' fatiguay for damn near all the  
troop,

There's a game of Crown and Anchor and I meant  
to join the group;

But the bloody two-stripe caught me so it's me  
that's in the soup,

An' that's what it is to be a soldier.

Now all the lucky civiles are lyin' in their beds

An' me that is a soldat is trampin' round the sheds,

It's enough to drive enlisted men to go and join the  
Reds

But that's how it feels to be a soldier.

I've been muckin' round the horse lines in the rain  
an' in the shine,

If I'd chance to go on furlough, I'd be feelin' fit an'  
fine.



But by everything that's holy they'll shove me up  
the line

For that's what it is to be a soldier.

Now the clouds are slowly driftin' an' the moon is  
breaking thro'

And I'm feelin' beaucoup fatiguay with still some  
hours to do,

An' I can't refrain from scratchin' for I'm more than  
itchy cou,

But that's how it feels to be a soldier.

Now tomorrow's kit inspection an' we'll lay the  
blasted lot

So the Gen'als an' the colonels can inspect them on  
the spot

From cur spare shirts to our toothbrush every last  
thing we have got

For they do take an int'rest in the soldier.

Now after kit inspection, don't we know it's comin'  
quick

The order to go up the line where shells are fallin'  
thick,

O' some of 'ems mallingerin'—but I am feelin' sick  
For there's damn rotten jobs they 'ave for  
soldiers.



## QUENTIN HILL

Disaster occurred to a trainload of young Royal Scots Territorials when two trains collided at Quentin Hill near Carlisle, May 1915.

It wasna in the battle that oor Scots lads fell  
(Hey the bonnie fechtters as they were)  
Amid the wire entanglements mid shriekin' o' the  
shell,

But there's mony a mither sobbin' in despair.

Little thocht oor brave anes, when they were settin'  
forth,

(O, the stout hearts that they bore)

Tae lie aneath the heather in their ain lo'ed North.  
An' no to shed their life-bluid in the war.

Lightly slid the coach lengths frae cheerin' thrangs  
behind

(Thrangs wi' faces strugglin' tae be gay)

An' pang'd wi' youth an eagerness adventures new  
tae find

The mighty train went thundering on its way.

Sune will pass the border o' the land that gave them  
birth

(O' the little foresicht gien tae men)  
The Borderland they're passin' is the Borderland  
o' Earth  
An' Scotland's braes the last they'll ever ken.

A sudden burst of tumult as the coaches sweep and  
sway  
(Steek your een in terror as a dream)  
They're doon an' owre the road-bed—Oh, God o'  
mercy stay—  
We canna see aucht mair for smoke an' steam.

Oh the sounds o' anguish an' the fearfu shrieks o'  
pain  
(Oh, the awfu' horror o' it a'!)  
The madd'ning licht o' torment that beats intae the  
brain—  
The heat that drives the rescuin' haun's awa'.

Alang the railed embankment just a wee frae  
Gretna Green  
(The bonnie North country that we ken)  
There's the waest sicht at sunrise, the Border lang  
has seen,  
An' they're pickin' up the wreckage—an' the  
men.



My heart is sair wi' thinkin' on the sights at  
Quentin Hill

(Oh, the awfu' sights that there are)

For the forms aneath the blankets that are lyin'  
charr'd an' still

As they drew them frae the wreckage o' the  
car.

The sun blink'd bricht an' bonnilie, and' ushered in  
the morn,

(O, the gladsome weather o' the May)

An' by the wee white farm-hoose lay the forms a'  
sear'd an' torn,

An' there's dool along the border-side the day.

There's weepin' in Auld Reekie, ay an' mony a  
toun beside

(Hey the prood places an' the auld)

They hae bred richt mony sodgers an' hae sent  
them far an' wide

But these owre soon are lyin' starks an' cauld.

Scotland—Mither Scotland, ye sall lay them tae yer  
breast,

(These among the bravest ye hae borne.)

They wad hae died for Britain, an' they wad hae  
stood the test,

An' we're prood o' them, Auld Mither, tho' we  
mourn.

## THE GENERAL DIDN'T KNOW THAT WE WERE THERE

The Army called a Grand Review to judge us by  
our looks,

The summons was for every rank that was upon the  
books,

Dog Robbers, Poultice Wallopers, and even greasy  
cooks,

But the General didn't know that we were there.

With a chum I once was walking, when I was a raw  
recruit,

We met a General Officer and tipped him the  
Salute,

He either was too busy or he didn't care a hoot,

Or the General never knew that we were there.

There was a kind of fracas in a Harv' estaminet

They tried to shoot the lights out, when a few of  
them got gay,

Of course, they called the Red Caps, but a number  
got away,

And the General didn't know that we were there.



There was a scrimmage up the line, and we were in  
it too,

A General was looking on to recommend a few.  
Some men collected medals—and no doubt it was  
their due;

But the General didn't know that we were there.

Now, when the war is finished and the last great gun  
is heard

There'll be Generals a-writing how the whole damn  
thing occurred,

And we're just common Troopers, so of course,  
'twould be absurd

If the General ever knew that we were there.



## EPISTLE TO HAMISH GOW

Mon cher ami—

Very pleased indeed I was  
To have your little note, because,  
Tho' nineteen-sixteen finds me here  
'Mid scenes I once had pictured queer—  
Of cobbled roads, and hedges thick,  
And rows of trees, and towns of brick,  
And strange old wind-mills standing tall,  
With arms outstretched for breeze or squall,  
I still have thoughts (in English, too)  
For my old friends, including you  
I still, Alberta scenes hold dear  
When your elections are not near;  
Yet, Heaven be thanked! Berlin and chance,  
Have brought us here to Northern France,  
Where, though war's havoc here we mark,  
We hear no word of Joseph C-a-ke!

Altho' at times the whizz-bangs fall,  
We hear no politics at all;  
Though poison gas whiles fills the air  
The politicians are not there,  
To spiel their oratorical flow  
Of what they think and what they know.



How pleasant in these rural parts  
To find but kind and genial hearts  
(For hereabout, as you must know  
The bold bad Bosches dare not show).  
And all our British press agree  
On what our own brave troops must be—  
True simple souls whose noble worth  
Is known to few of us on earth;  
Yet each one prompted by desire  
To brave the deadly rifle fire  
"For England, Home and Beauty dear;"  
To leave behind all craven fear  
And dying, win V.C.'s or fetch  
Two columns in the Daily Sketch.

Dwell softly, for these thoughts stretched far  
Are what the public think we are,  
Now old Romance, and printed lore,  
We bow to thee whom we adore.  
Let pass each dream, tho' far from true,  
We are not all we seem to you;  
Yet all the heroes of old time  
Were not just all we read in rhyme.

Now by the "papier" brought today,  
I see great news is on the way,  
And o'er all news that men may bring

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Just hark the herald, Scarlett-Synge,  
By March, perhaps, the war may end.  
(She tells it to us as a friend)  
Yet whether in this present year  
I cannot find the statement clear.  
So we may get to March, and yet  
Have months of cold and wind and wet,  
And while we wait for these Peace Talks,  
May wear out 14 pair of socks,  
And throw our well-worn shirts away  
While marvelling at the strange delay;,  
Whole tons of rations—jam and cheese  
(And breakfast bacon, if you please)  
With bread and tea, and more at length,  
That gives the soldier fighting strength,  
May straightway come, and straightway go,  
(For Tennyson would put it so,)  
Yet still, as March around shall swing,  
We'll think of Dr. Scarlett-Synge.

Now James, dear James, it gives me pain  
To read your letter once again;  
How many a rack and wrench and screw  
The damned rheumatics bring to you!  
No doubt when some few years slip by,  
And we're at home, and high and dry,  
With feet up by our own fireside,

Like some old hulk above the tide,  
We'll rouse old thoughts of scenes of blood,  
And watery roads and Flanders' mud,  
Then hardships far, and half unreal,  
Our own stiff joints shall help us feel.

Well, having won, tho' not with cheer,  
Across the threshold of this year,  
We deem it duty to survive  
And help to keep the war alive:  
Thus when, at times, our hope seems gone,  
The boys' rum ration helps them on,  
And keeps them hoping to attack  
When Russia drives the Bulgars back,  
So when such hopes as these are mine,  
I fain would drop old friends a line  
And tell them half of what I know  
(But here the censor has a show)  
So all the wise thoughts I retain  
Which ought to make my letter plain.  
Good luck to all on the old job,  
And I remain, sincerely,

BOB.

France, ~~January~~ 1916.

Edmonton, Alberta, papers contained a letter about this time from Dr. Ella Scarlett-Synge (a descendent of Scarlett of Scarlett's brigade) prophesying that the war would be over in March.

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**BALKAN NEWS**

The Bold Bad Bulgarians have proved themselves a  
plague,  
For they have no ideas of Conventions at the  
Hague,  
And their best line of Kultur is very, very vague  
All along the road to Salonica.

The French and the British, they held the foe at bay  
With six of the big guns, they could not get away;  
Then they got a speedy hustle on—or so the papers  
say  
All along the road to Salonica.

Jean Crepaud and Johnny Bull, to travel were not  
slow  
But they left three Irish regiments to shield them  
from the foe.  
And the bold bad Bulgarians were heaped up in a  
row  
All along the road to Salonica.

---



The only cheerful aspect, as far as we can see.  
Is that we've got a Scot now, where but a Scot  
should be  
And we'll have no Haig Conventions but the Kaiser  
will agree  
It's as far to Tipperary as Salonica.

France, December 19, 1915.



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FROM WAR LETTER

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Written Somewhere in Flanders, May 22, 1916.

A Fleming informs me of something most queer,  
That eight meals a day is the minimum here.  
He offered to tell me each name on the list,  
But as soon as he started I bade him desist,  
For I told him in Canada over the seas,  
It took some tall rustling to get hold of three,  
And should I go back when this war shall abate,  
I might starve on three meals if once used to eight.  
But I must say it's great how our health all agrees.  
With Macconochie Rations and beaucoup the  
cheese,

And now that the hot days of summer are come.  
The boys are bemoaning curtailment of Rum  
It's a most useful issue, 'tis wise to provide,  
But that's not the issue we came to decide,  
And if we preserve all our spirits intact,  
I hope our Advancement will soon be a fact.

---

## THE WORKING PARTY

As I was coming down the lines and feeling quite forsaken,

I ran across that soldier fine—Our Sergeant Paddy Aiken;

His belt was on, his spurs were bright, and he shouted loud and steady,

"There's a Working Party going tonight so haste, and get you ready."

"It's up the line for you, my buck

Up the line, my hearty;

Up the line with the best of luck,

And it's you for the Working Party."

You will not ride your horse to war, if it tends to make you happy,

But trot along to the cook-house door, and see that you make it snappy,

You'll draw iron rations to stand the test (just a couple of war mementoes,

Two of the tins of Macconochie's Best or some of the real Fray Bentos.

"It's up the line for you, my buck

Up the line, my hearty,

Up the line with the best of luck,

And it's you for the Working Party."

---

Tonight the stars will be shining bright—the Star  
Shells from the trenches,

And you'll be up where it's far too light among the  
muck and stench

You'll hear the passing whizz-bangs whine, you'll  
hear the shells resounding

You'll hear big-guns, each side the line, at their  
eternal pounding.

“It's up the line for you, my buck

Up the line, my hearty,

Up the line with the best of luck,

And it's you for the Working Party.”

Now have your rifle oil'd and shined, (you'll maybe  
need it later)

And don't forget and leave behind your trusty  
respirator;

You'll wear your tin hats, all so light, with first-aid  
dressings handy,

For if Fritzie opens the Ball tonight you'll need  
them fine and dandy.

“It's up the line for you, my buck

Up the line, my hearty,

Up the line with the best of luck,

And it's you for the Working Party.”



Now at the Cross roads you'll fall in and from the  
right will number

In two big trucks they'll then begin (to pack you  
in like lumber.)

Now why in the world did ye want to join and come  
with a fightin' Squadron

They'll pay ye off in the Devil's own coin in a WAR  
that's strictly mod'ren.

"It's up the line for you, my buck

Up the line, my hearty,

Up the line with the best of luck,

And it's you for the Working Party."

Tho' now ye're like a Sardine Pack (here's cheer if  
ye'd but listen,)

There'll be lots of room for ye comin' back if the  
half of the bunch is missin'

Ye'll bend your backs to shovel and pick but there's  
duty in all your labor

An' Honors can come to ye just as thick as they  
would with a cavalry sabre.

"It's up the line for you, my buck

Up the line, my hearty,

Up the line with the best of luck,

And it's you for the Working Party."

---



Now we were in that four years' row with quite a  
few commanders

And poor old Paddy Aiken now is lying there in  
Flanders,

But when our minds slip back a cog where star-  
shells once were falling

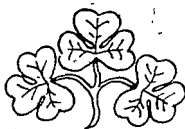
We'll hear with, just a touch of brogue his Irish  
accents calling:

"It's up the line for you, my buck

Up the line, my hearty,

Up the line with the best of luck,

And it's you for the Working Party."



**SHIRTS**

Now, nineteen months have slipped around  
Since the channel we cross'd over  
And still the Deutchers do not pound  
The old chalk cliffs of Dover  
And quite a few of our old boys  
Are Cappies now and Majors.  
Yet some of us still plod along  
And are the same old staggers  
Every day in the week.

We're wearing grey-back shirts that still  
We're very glad to have on,  
Yet many months they have not had  
Acquaintanceship with SAVON,  
Yet all the boys are very well  
In fact, I might say thriving,  
And would not spend their francs on shirts  
If payday were arriving  
Every day in the week.

We've curried down our weary plugs  
Until their hides are tender,  
And when we catch the Kaiser's thugs  
Their chances will be slender  
Roll on, sweet days of coming peace,  
And changes sweet and pleasant  
For gladly would I change the shirt  
That I have on at present.  
Every day in the week.

## "LA GRANDE GUERRE"

B. G. W. P. 1918

They brought them down—these men of ours—  
From the hillside where they fell—  
These that went forth, but an hour ago,  
So blythesome and so well,  
On sheets of the corrugated iron,  
That served as stretchers sound,  
Four men to the corpse, they carried them  
Across the broken ground.

Each, gray, grim form lay stark and stiff  
In a blanket tightly sewn,  
And back on the flats they laid them down,  
Where they shall not lie alone,  
The little forest of crosses stands  
Unpainted and bleak and bare,  
Grim as the trees all shrapnel-scarred,  
With marr'd limbs high in air.

A wood oft swept by a rain of death—  
A fair land ravished sore—  
Oh, pity it is that the hand of man  
Does all these things, and more.  
~~Brave Nature, heedless of sack and ruth,~~  
Soon covers the mounds with green;  
Then ever again the storm descends  
O'er the carnage-vaults between.

Out there in the land that men abhor,  
Are shell-holes deep and round  
Filled with the water of many rains,  
And dead that were not drowned,  
Rotted sand-bags and rusted wire,  
And iron all warped and drawn,  
And under it all the human moles,  
Are tunnelling ever on.

For not content with dispensing death  
From the God-free air as well  
They must burrow, like worms, the earth beneath,  
And be mining the gates of Hell.  
These, that were formed in the image of God,  
We were taught at our mother's knee,  
They have mangled out of the semblance of men,  
And where shall the glory be?

Oh, carry the dead to the dead below,  
For I see where the earth-heaps brown,  
They are bailing the water out of the graves,  
And lowering dead men down,  
Men have err'd thro' the judgement of kings,  
Since the primal feuds outgrew,  
And the mighty Moloch, that thirsts for blood  
Is glutting itself anew.

Yet under the uniforms gray or green  
As they carry the dead away;  
Each is the form of a man—no—more—  
Modelled out of the Maker's clay.  
And they speak of that mystical part—the soul  
That is salvaged out of the loss,  
And rises up from the fields of slain  
By the blood-stained way of the Cross.

O, talk of the glory and lustre of war,  
And the medals they pin to the breast  
Think of the courage we share with the brutes,  
And the strength that those arms possessed,  
Then look at those forms that are pitiful now,  
And over success we've scored,  
The tears that are blotting the Honor Lists  
Make medals a poor reward.

Flanders, June 10, 1916.



**BIVVIES IN FRANCE**

I wish I could show you my "bivvie" in France—  
You might call it far from neat;  
Its roof is an army blanket gray.  
And also a rubber sheet.  
At present it's under an apple tree  
That is white with the blossoms of May;  
Tomorrow, perhaps, 'twill be pitched the same.  
But a good many miles away.

At night, if the air be damp and chill,  
Or even there happen a storm,  
I can lie quite snug 'neath a saddle-rug,  
Wrapped up in my "British Warm."  
So why should I worry about "la guerre"  
And the scraps that we all may see,  
When, among all the bullets that Fritzie holds,  
There may not be one for me.

I'll crawl, while I can, in my bivouac frail,  
And bed down as best I may,  
For many poor lads who lay warm 'last night  
Are under the Belgian clay.  
It's a queer old world at best, you know.  
And there's much that we leave to chance.  
For many who once held "Castles in Spain,"  
Are reduced to "bivvies" in France.

Written at Haut Loquin, May 7, 1916.



Now, I'm just a bit of a Horse Wrangler  
That has drifted into this show,  
An' I don't figure out as a troubadour  
Like Blondel long ago.  
Still I'd like to, voice the sentiments  
Of common men like me,  
In regard to a Prince, that is a PRINCE  
An' that's our Edward P.

There's many a man of lesser rank  
With none so much excuse,  
Who would have stayed in the home corral  
When the Kaiser's herd bust loose,  
But when the pick of the round-up came  
To be marked for Oversea,  
If anyone hung back on the rope  
It was not Edward P.

Now all we chaps from Canada West

We value men on their own,

But we are not such an ornery lot

As not to respect the throne,

And we always know a thoroughbred

When such a one we see,

And we don't back up for the Horse-Guards bunch

In respect to Edward P.

Now, we're goin' to ride the ranges here

Till our Tanks have forced the line,

And when the German herd stampedes

We'll follow it to the Rhine

And when we hit the home-stretch

As soon as they set us free,

There'll be none have Alberta's welcome

As much as Edward P.





## "A" SQUADRON, CANADIAN CORPS CAVALRY

The 19th Albertas we used to be  
Until we were joined to the C.C.C.,  
But now we may travel for many long moons  
And never be known as Alberta Dragoons—  
For such is life in the Army.

When we were new soldiers, unused to drill,  
They gave us big pistols to pack at will;  
But though we have cleaned them and kept them  
from dirt,  
They have taken them from us, for fear we get  
hurt—  
For such is the way of the Army.

Oh, when we were still upon Canada's shores,  
We thought cleaning buttons would never win  
wars;  
But now all the money they give us to use  
Is invested in Brasso, instead of in booze—  
For such is the way of the Army.

It occurred to our foolish and juvenile mind  
That the steelwork on harness should never be  
shined;

But now we know things have been otherwise  
planned,

And a trooper who's lacking in grit or in sand  
Can never get on in the Army.

We once sported Cavalry boots that were nice,  
From our own private incomes we paid out the  
price,

But alack! they have issued us puttees again,  
And are making us walk like the infantrymen—  
The regular steps of the Army.

We used to walk out with a swaggering air,  
And fine nickel spurs (such as officers wear),  
But all fancy spurs now are under a ban,  
For the plain steel belongs to the soldiering man  
Who is only a "buck" in the Army.

Long since we went out on an exercise ride,  
With our loose khaki shirts all unbuttoned quite  
wide,

But now every button our tunics must show  
And we pack our smoke-helmets wherever we go—  
For such is the rule of the Army.

Oh, poor old "A" squadron—they call us that  
now—

There's one consolation we all must allow,

They may take all our marks of distinction away  
But the General wills that the Stetsons shall stay  
As long as we stay in the Army.

"Oh, what did you do, Daddy, out in the War?"  
"Oh, hush, child, I served in a Cavalry Corps."  
"And tell me the way that you won the V.C."  
"By wielding a shovel on Hill 63,"  
When I worked like a horse in the Army."

"And tell me, dear dad, were your chargers most  
keen?"  
"Oh yes, ma cherie, we had horses to clean,  
They were specially keen 'bout the time they were  
fed,  
And on grazing parades they were frequently led—  
For such is life in the Army."

Oh, kind friend, I prithee, give ear to my lay,  
And do not depart till you hear what I say:  
You can trust the old soldier right down to the  
ground—  
Could you lend me a franc until pay-day comes  
round?  
For once I belonged to the Army.

Flanders, July 27, 1916.

**"OLD MAC"**

(Trooper A. K. MacKinven, "Ceann Loch gu  
Brath." Died of Wounds.)

You had the heart of a Celt, old Mac,  
With your real old Highland name,  
And you could not brook to bide in peace  
When the call to others came.  
So you were one of the first to 'list,  
And you laughed at shell and bomb,  
Knowing the dangers we had to face  
When they sent us down on the Somme.

Now, well I mind, when another fell,  
And your Muse brought forth for him,  
Our empty saddles are filling fast,  
And we now ride gay and trim.  
Yet you would have written a line, I'm sure,  
Had Fate but made decree  
That you'd keep riding the roads of France,  
And turned thumbs down for me.

You had the readiest laugh, old Mac;  
That echoed our lightest joys,  
So whether in camp or estaminet

You could be "one of the boys."  
They'll miss your voice from the troop for long.  
And from out of the squadron, too;  
There'll be "beaucou' " ghosts on the ride tonight—  
Do they ride as fast as you?

I often think, as a soldier will—  
As soldiers have always thought—  
Of the vanished ones who came with us,  
Rode with us, worked, and fought;  
So I see "Slim" Gayer on the ride with you  
And a dozen more bucks beside.  
(They wouldn't be officers, over the crest,  
When you travelled the Great Divide).

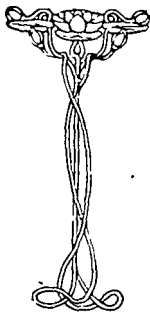
There were neither of us with stripes, Old Mac,  
Oh well! is it cause for shame?  
We were happy enough to be doing our bit  
And playing our part in the game.  
It is not for you that our sorrow flows,  
Since you no help require—  
But a poor old mother is broken, I know,  
In a village of old Cantyre.

I know you were Scotch to the core, Old Mac,  
But your heart loved ever best  
The spaces broad and the places wide



Where men think big in the West.  
So Canada claimed you, too, at heart,  
And there's honor in this alone,  
That you came with Canada's First—and died  
As one of Canada's own.

France 23-10-16.



TROOPERS IN FRANCE

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WHO LEADS THE BAY MARE HOME  
TONIGHT?

By Trooper Angus K. MacKinven  
(Old Mac)

Of the "A" Squadron, C.L.H.      Died of Wounds

*Who leads the bay mare home tonight—  
The little hard-mouthed bay  
Fifteen-three, with a camel's gait,  
But a stayer all the way?*

*He'll have an easy time who does,  
For the bay mare travels light,  
But he'll travel knee to knee with the ghost  
Of him who "went West" tonight.*

*Oh, the "Foot-slogger" envies our easy time  
And sneers as we pass him by,  
And we could almost envy him—  
Ay, envy him,—and why?*

*For the road patrols that he doesn't do,  
For the rest we never get,  
For the "All right, boys, take it easy now"  
'stead of "Hell! Ain't you mounted yet?"*

*We're a military all sorts,  
We're the service "lucky dip".  
Today we're a Vet's Inspection,  
To-morrow, an all-day trip.*

*And tonight, a full-fledged sapper,  
A would-be martinet,  
Hears our non-repeating cuss-words  
From his blankety parapet.*

*And he was out there with us,  
But his saddle is empty and light,  
For back in his merry emplacement  
Fritz pumps death out into the night.*

*There's a lass will weep in Blighty,  
There's a home back Winnipeg way—  
Ha, the squadron's on the move now,  
And Jackson's leading the bay.*

Extract from a letter of mine, March 18, 1916:

"Rather a peculiar thing happened in the squadron not long ago. One of a recent draft from the Fort Garry's was sent up on a working party—the first trip into the trenches for the poor lad. A ricochet bullet took an eye out almost before the trooper had a chance to look about him.

"Well, when this unfortunate soldier departed never to return to us, his bay mare was given to another man, also a recent arrival from the Fort Garrys. The successor to the mount fell the victim of a sniper very shortly afterward. So impressed was a Highland friend of mine, in the 4th troop (in which the dead men had ranked), that he, having a natural adaptability for verse, turned out some very creditable stanzas entitled "Who Leads the Bay Mare Home Tonight?"

"Poor MacKynven died of wounds received on the Somme in the autumn of the same year (1916) and lies close to Albert."



## ON SENTRY

All night the search-lights rake the skies;  
-Their long white arms grope to and fro,  
And in between the fan-flares rise,  
And the red rockets of the foe,  
From the low sand-dunes of the north,  
Where Belgium's army stands at bay,  
The maxims bark defiance forth  
To the invading hosts in gray.

Unto the Vosges far away  
The long sand-bagged entrenchment runs,  
Where Britons grouch at long delay,  
And Frenchmen curse behind their guns,  
Here, where I tramp my beat tonight,  
Seeing weird shapes in hedge or tree  
Even the shafts of ghostly light  
Have brought strange fancies unto me.

I care not who the man may be,  
But when he is apart—alone,  
His thoughts burst from the common sea  
To seek a channel of their own,  
And though grim war lies out beyond.  
And No Man's Land lies in between,  
Peace comes to wave her magic wand  
In darkness o'er each war-skaithed scene.



A sentry's ear must needs be keen  
To every sound that breathes or bodes;  
Advancing millions seem to mean  
Those countless hoof-beats on the roads,  
And yet I know that day by day  
The same strong stream of transport flows,  
With food for man and beast that play  
The check-game with our Empire's foes.

Hear! Up along the road, there goes  
An army marching in the night,  
Where have they gone? No sentry knows  
When shall they come? No king hath sight.  
There, where they turn, a Calvary rears;  
With pierced side and thorn-made crown,  
After these nineteen hundred years  
A lonely Christ looks sadly down.

And still battallions from the town—  
Young, fresh-faced lads, if one could see  
With just the healthiest tinge of brown  
From open life by dale and lea.  
What troops are these? We must not say,  
Therefore it is they march by night,  
But those who meet them in the day  
Know ever then how Britons fight.

And these have others' wrongs to right

Tho' Empire holds so much at stake,

There are brave ideals in the sight,

That cause men die for Britain's sake.

Perchance, the self-same road they take

Where Caesar's legionaries trod,

Or Charlemagne caused nations quake,

And baptized Saxons unto God.

The tall trees by the roadway nod

With spirits passing in the air,

And on the highway, hard and broad,

The marching feet are everywhere,

Whether it be by flood or field,

We finish what our own begin;

Our Empire's place we cannot yield;

We only know that we must win.

Now, in the East, the dawn breaks gray,

And with the morn the night-lights pale,

When shall Peace walk abroad by day

To teach men where their bravest fail?

Strong men go up to fight in war,

But leal men plan how strife shall cease,

For men true to the very core,

Are giants in the ways of peace.

Written while in billets near Bailleul, March, 1916.

## TROOPERS IN FRANCE

In the Fall of 1916, a scouting party of the Canadian Light Horse were let'thro' the advanced Canadian lines in order to locate the exact position of the enemy who had retired at this point. In the early dawn the mounted party advanced up the Le Sars road, but presently came under Machine Gun fire and lost a number of men and horses.

Later, the same morning, in the direction of Pys, several troopers made a mounted patrol and succeeded in penetrating behind the enemy machine guns. The information procured for headquarters caused the Canadian line at this point (Courcellette) to be advanced eleven hundred yards.

There are little wooden crosses that the men are  
taking up  
To place upon the graves of those we knew—  
The boys who rode out with us on our little lone  
patrols,  
And the ones who carried in the stretchers too.  
We shall see as long as life shall last, the sights a  
soldier sees  
Where the tide of battle back and forward flowed,

And among the blackened corpses on the pave west  
of Pys

There's a Light Horse trooper lying in the road.

When the early mist was rising, and the morn was  
damp and cold

Thro' the rusted wire we carefully rode on,

And when the sun came showing like a little band  
of gold,

'Twas a charnel vault we look'd on in the dawn.

Oh out across the broken ground we know of graves  
that lie

Where we placed men in the shell-holes as they fell.

But the chance of doing greater things can nerve  
men on to die,

And they had allotted tasks, and did them well.

Composed at Divion, France,

October 2, 1916.



**C'EST LA GUERRE M'SIEUR**

Ol' Monsieur Beauvais on de Rue Bruay  
I met heem mese'f only yesterday,  
And all de ol' bonhomme have got to say  
Was "C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

Soldat Canadien been here long tam  
Dat's mak' plaintee troub' for me an' ma femme.  
Eet's not verree pleas' wit whole t'ing I am,  
But C'est le guerre, M'sieur.

I know eet, de Boche, he ees come long way,  
Ma' de Grande Avance on de Pas de Calais,  
He mak' eet too free evree place he stay,  
But C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

Oh, Sacre Tonnerre! wat I tell to you  
Dat's verree bad t'ing wat dat Boche weel do—  
But Canadien's stealin' my hop-pole too,  
Oh, C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

I don't lak dat soldat w'at's ver' bad t'ief,  
But hee's always tres jolie w'en goin' on leef,  
An' he geev me beaucoup of de Boulli beuf,  
An' C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

Dat Allemand Soldat dat come on here  
He dreenk eet too mooch of de bon bon biere,  
But Canadien's likin' de vin blanc claire,  
Oh, C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

Canadien's bon soldat on Grande Attaque  
An' mebee hee's drivin' l'enemei back,  
Would M'sieur but geev me de small tabac?  
For C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

I feel eet mon peep for firs' tam today,  
Ees Monsieur un sergeant—un chevalier?  
An' w'en do you t'ink eet ees come La Paix?  
Oh, C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

O pauvre la France, dat ees longue longue guerre,  
We tak' eet too mooch of de prisonnierre,  
W'y not sen' dem over to Anglaterre?  
For C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

Dat ees beaucoup brigand w'at ees pillage on me,  
Escadrons d'infanterie billet ici,  
I am caput—perdu eef la guerre no finis  
But C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

Weel M'sieur have eet un tasse la biere?  
I geeve you "Bon Chance"—dat ees "Good Luck",

M'sieur,

An' donnez m'ois un petite souvenir

For C'est la guerre, M'sieur.

Ol' M'sieur Beauvais on de Rue Bruay

He speak wit' all soldat who pass dat way,

But de ol' feller never have mooch to say

But C'est la guerre, M'sieur.





## NOEL

'Twas a song of peace that angels sang  
On that Noel of long ago,  
While humble shepherds watched their flocks  
In the star-lit fields below,  
Great Kings of the earth, they then made war,  
And war is as red to-day,  
But the soldiers' hearts go back to the peace  
Of their hearth-sides far away.

'Twas a manger'd stall of the rudest kind  
To which the Christ Child came,  
And near two thousand years from His birth—  
We lie in stalls the same,  
Now, none can call us men of Peace,  
Who dwell in loft and byre,  
But peaceful days are dear to us  
Some leagues behind the Fire.

Hark ye! what sounds are these ye hear  
Borne thro' the frosty air?  
The rumbling roar of mighty guns  
Great nations bring to bear.  
Oh, bring your costly gifts of myrrh  
And incense highly priced,

But sacrifice of blood give we  
Two thousand years from Christ.

Shall this be deemed acceptable  
Blood off'rings spread abroad,  
Or like the sacrifice of Cain  
Rejected be of God?  
Well weigh we, all the lessons learned  
Both sides opposed in Strife  
And ne'er make allied cause with DEATH  
Who should make cause with Life.

'Twas a song of Peace the Angels sang  
O'er Bethlehem town of old  
What Songs sing now the heavenly choir  
O'er broken hearths and cold?  
There are broken altars and ruined homes  
And blood-washed slopes as well,  
And with shame we say, we are keeping the day  
That men still call "NOEL".

France, Christmas 1916.



## SOUVENIRS OF THE WAR

We haven't much time to sorrow  
For the men we left behind,  
Whom we hastily covered in shell-holes  
Where the ugly trenches wind.  
To-morrow, perhaps, they'll move us  
To another place on the front;  
We'll miss many old-time comrades  
When we pull off another stunt.

There'll be lots of brand-new faces  
With new drafts drifting in:  
To-day they are sorting out trinkets  
To send to the "next of kin."  
The Paymaster's busy, I tell you,  
With lists and labels galore,  
Tying up tiny bundles—  
Souvenirs of the War!

Just check this lot as I give it  
(There isn't much to send)  
A little wrist watch—now broken—  
The gift of a lady friend.  
A Testament, too, from Mother,  
Quite clean on each leaf inside,  
And a little old, dog-eared diary,  
Made up to the day he died.

There's photos of all the homefolks—  
His own looking brave and stern—  
A packet of one girl's letters,  
Always too dear to burn;  
A couple of battered badges  
Which, perhaps, that girl may prize;  
(There's lots of work for the pay-clerks  
With every man who dies).

Of course, you're thinking of Charlie  
And the last we saw of Mac,  
We, all of us, prayed to get forward  
And never a man held back.  
So, whether they dropped on the pave  
Or were simply blown to bits,  
It's only some more that's added  
To the score we settle with Fritz.

There are souvenirs meant to be handled,  
Looked on, cried over, and such,  
And ones that lie deep in our memory  
But do not respond to touch.  
Scenes that will rise to fancy,  
When war has faded from sight,  
And we look down on old "Sausage Valley,"  
And fields where we labored by night.

We'll go back with some empty saddles

When the regiment moves again,

They'll start the old drill all over

For the sake of new cavalry men,

We've been in the line of battle.

Looked Death in the face, and stared,

Some that have gone were youngsters!

How does it come we're spared?

Some will have ribbons upon them,

Each will have jousting with fate;

Soldiers are men who can see things

Too frightful to ever relate,

Oft in the years long-coming

Mem'ry will haunt us back

To corpses in gray and khaki—

Horrible, bloated, and black.

We haven't the time to sorrow

For comrades we left out there;

We did what we could for the living,

The dead had no cause to care;

When our turn comes for passing

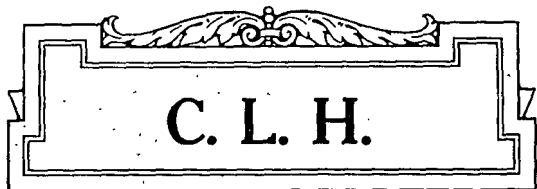
The same as those we miss

We won't ask more of tribute—

Than a little old poem like this.

France, Oct 11th, 1916.





“CANADA’S LAST HOPE”

We once were three that now are one,  
For henceforth it shall be  
That they shall ride as only one  
Who once rode forth as three.  
And we that were “Straubenzie’s Horse”,  
And always in the Van,  
Are “Colonel Léonard’s Hopefuls” now  
Three squadrons to a man.

By devious ways we wandered forth  
To seek our fame and scars;  
And some of us were bold dragoons  
And some were called hussars.  
Oftimes we had been called by names  
Not “kultured” or refined—  
But when they gave us “C.C.C.”  
It almost struck us blind.

We've ridden down along the Aire,  
We've been beside the Somme  
We've been a bit of everywhere  
They need a fighting "homme."  
We often left our old chevaux  
And shovelled sand galore,  
But when they called "Corps Cavalry"  
It struck us to the core.

Each squadron had a chosen badge,  
And each was loathe to change;  
And every draft that came along  
Had badges new and strange,  
'Twould sore perplex Von Hindenburg  
To tell what men we were,  
For no one really seemed to know,  
And no one seemed to care.

As we went out upon a ride,  
The soldiers, by the way,  
All thought we were Strathcona Horse  
Until they heard us say:  
"We are Hussars!" "We are Dragoons!"  
"We are some R.C.D.!"  
"Fort Garry Horse," and "C.M.R.'s,"  
And — who the h—ll are we?

A little bit of everything  
Could sit a horse and ride—  
The pick of Western shovelry  
That dug both deep and wide,  
Until our travelling orders came,  
And then in groups and scores  
We heard commands of "Sections file,"  
And started—"forming fours."

'Tis pleasant after strenuous toil,  
Of weary, winter days,  
To clean our rusted swords and spurs,  
And rustle in the strays.  
And soon upon our shoulder straps  
The "C.L.H." will shine,  
When "Canada's Last Hope" at last  
Goes riding up the line.

Oh, Fritzie! tremble in your boots,  
And shiver while you may,  
For Canada's own "shovelry"  
Are getting under way,  
You'll find us "odds and ends" no doubt,  
But when the charge goes through,  
The end will not be as you planned,  
For the odds are not with you!

Composite Regiment Divisional Cavalry of 1st,  
2nd and 3rd, Contingents: "A" 19th A.D.; "B"  
1st Hussars (London, Ont.); "C" 16th Light  
Horse (Regina).

Col. Leonard succeeded Col. Van Straubenzie.



## ALL IN THE NIGHT ATTACK

Oh, Madam Mignonne at Divion,  
She laves our clothes with care,  
She never uses the hot water  
~~For she has none to spare~~  
She never uses much Savon  
So when she brings them back  
We're searching the seams of our lingerie  
All in the Night Attack.

O' the little crawling cooties  
Are with us in our dreams,  
O, soldier loan me a candle  
To run along the seams,  
I'm sitting up over the cow-barn  
And the night is cold and black  
There's a lot of Nives that are sacrificed  
All in the Night Attack.

Now infantry men have troubles  
Like blisters upon their feet,  
And it must be hard on Kiltie Men  
To search in every pleat,

But even the favored cavalry,  
Are getting on to the knack,  
Of looking after the little things  
All in the Night Attack.

Now from bewhiskered poilus  
We have derived a few,  
And new breeds from the Heinies  
To add to those we knew.  
So when we're back in billets,  
(And life a wee bit slack  
You'll find us joining briskly  
All in the Night Attack.



## IT WASN'T THE FAULT OF THE COLONEL

Written on a very special occasion, being the  
issue of new Grey-back Shirts at a time when they  
were sorely needed by the squadrons.

Oh why are the Cavalry boys so gay  
When Winter days are not far away,  
When we constantly wade thro' the lines in dirt?  
Well, the secret lies in a good clean shirt—  
But it isn't the fault of the colonel.

When the Summer days were warm and long,  
They rode their horses so wiry and strong,  
And took them over the jumps and runs,  
And slashed at turnips instead of Huns—  
Which wasn't the fault of the colonel.

When they'd worked all day, their King to please,  
They crawled in bivvies under the trees,  
And look off their shirts by candle light,  
And killed everything they found in sight,  
Which wasn't the fault of the colonel.

They straffed the Fritzies who held them here,  
And longed for pay-day, and francs and beer;  
Then they paid instalments on debts they owed,  
And sought the estaminets down the road,  
Which wasn't the fault of the colonel.

"Madame your biere's no bon," they sang,  
And they raised their song till the rafters rang,  
But they drank the biere 'till 'twas all napoo,  
And hit for camp ere the First Post blew—  
Which was all the fault of the colonel.

There were working parties that called them out  
Where the Allemand shells dropt round about,  
And the pale moon watched them flit like ghosts  
To wiring parties and listening posts,  
At advance points set by the colonel.

One dark, dark night, as they forward stole,  
An officer slipped in a deep shell-hole  
'Twas a painful moment of fear and wrath,  
As one of the Regiment indulged in a bath,  
Which wasn't the plan of the colonel.

Our General Byng reviewed them all,  
And he liked their looks and he liked their gall;  
He remarked that they sat their horses well  
And hadn't a doubt they could run like hell  
When they worked on a scheme of the colonel's.

But now all the regiment are scrubbed to the hide,  
And are trusting there's underwear to be supplied,  
So when we ride up, the bad Bosches to meet,  
We may have cold backs, and we may get cold  
feet—

But it won't be the fault of the colonel.

Contay (Somme) France, 20-9-16.

## OUT OF ACTION

The Cook, he dished the "Dog Vomit" up (he may  
have called it hash)

There was Pork and Beans and Macconochie Stew  
and a lot of other trash;

There are thirty men on the sick parade and the  
regiment gone to smash,

So the Medico ordered up the Number Nines.

The 'Cook's Bitch' scoured the dixies out, and he  
did not sand them well

And what's come over the fighting men is more  
than I can tell,

I've a touch of the collywobbles myself and I know  
it feels like hell

But the Doc has ordered up the Number Nines.

The King's effective fighting force is something  
can't be had,

The adjutant looks serious—the colonel's fighting  
mad,

And the line-up on the Sick Parade reports

Beaucoup Malad'

While the 'Croix Rouge' is dispensing Number  
Nines.

We're not the sort of shock troops now, to hold the  
foe at bay

We wouldn't give a tinker's damn if the war should  
end today,

And it's time the Poultrice Wallopers were carting us  
away

For you do get results from Number Nines.

Now some of these fine days again, we'll have a go  
at Fritz

But now as far as we're concerned we're ready to  
cry quits

Just one more sight of Number Nines would drive  
us all to fits.

For one does feel disgust at Number Nines.

Now, some that go malingering have not the guts to  
spare,

And some that get on Sick Parade, they never  
should be there,

But who's eaten our Slumgullion has more than had  
his share

Till they bring on his dose of Number Nines!

*Handwritten flourish*

7

## ON THE "DUCK-WALKS" EAST OF YPRES

On the "duck-walks," east of Ypres, thick with  
mud and splashed with gore,  
Where the shells are ever hurling thro' the holo-  
caust of war,  
I can see our own men toiling in those awful days  
agone,  
So our mitrileurs were thankful, and their guns went  
rattling on.

We've done all kinds of soldiering, and tried all  
kinds of jobs,  
In quite all kind of places, and felt all kinds of  
throbs;  
But the Valley of the Shadow seemed the closest on  
the nights  
When we tumped\* along by Boethoek, on the way  
to Abram Heights.

We used to feel our stirrups in a kind of pride that  
we  
Were not so much foot sloggers as a kind of  
cavalree;  
We've done some queer apprenticeships on cheval  
and on shale,  
But the queerest on the "duck-walks" out en route  
to Paschendaele.

\* Referring to use of the "Tump-line" in packing loads

There are so many gruesome sights a soldier has to  
see,  
One cannot shut one's eyes to half the hell of  
misery;  
But I've quailed before the stretchers coming laden—  
coming slow,  
And the blood a-dripping, dripping, to the "duck-  
walk" down below.

Oh, many a time in boyhood have we looked on  
martial views,  
Where artistic fancy revelled in the mingled reds  
and blues;  
But here the scene is blackened in the mud and in  
the rain—  
And the red is on the board-cleats, where a stretcher  
has but lain.

The infantry come marching, not together, but out-  
spread;  
They do not have the pipers striding jauntily ahead;  
They left all pomp behind them where the pave-  
roads are clear,  
And they're going into action strung with packs and  
sacks and gear.

They learned to do their "form-fours" on the  
British barrack squares,  
But here they're stepping gingerly without the  
martial airs.



You have to feel, on dark nights, the place your  
foot would seek,  
And the way is long and narrow out along by  
Zonnebeke.

The flashes of the big guns herald far their roar of  
hate—  
The barking of the small guns sounds in between  
the great;  
And out across the quagmire you can hear  
spasmodic breaks—  
The punctuated rattle that our own machine gun  
makes.

Get down from off the "duck-walks", get in the mud  
and ooze;  
Crouch in beside machine guns in any trench you  
choose;  
And when our own barrage-fire rips out its hail of  
death  
Across the trembling earthworks you'll feel the  
spirit-breath!

You'll feel the cold air passing, you'll sense the  
spectres there,  
The wraiths that pass so constantly from horror and  
despair;



Your eyes will peer beyond you to-ward where the  
foeman wait,  
And you'll wonder if the good God hears these  
awful hymns of hate.

I have seen dead Fritzies lying as I've seen our own  
boys fall;  
And I've seen some tiny Bibles in their knapsacks  
after all;  
I can hear each bullét zipping from the belts that  
we have filled  
And I know there are some prayer books on the  
men that we have killed.

Along the line of rusted wire where awful fragments  
cling,  
Besides a battered "pill-box" I saw a woeful thing—  
Just one poor, fair-haired farm lad, drawn from a  
Saxon farm,  
His latest home-land parcel beneath his shattered  
arm.

Oh Kaiser, had you seen him, with face turned to the  
skies,  
You had not thought your kingship the greatest  
thing to prize;  
Oh Kaiser, had you forseen some sights we soldiers  
see,

You'd rather be a private like your poor man, or  
me.

You would not feel the greatness thrust on you by  
your birth,

If you crouched in this charnel on blood-polluted  
earth;

The gas you launched at Ypres you thought would  
turn the scale,

And there's gassed green corpses lying on the ridge  
by Paschendaele!

(Written while attached to Borden and Sifton  
Batteries Motor Machine Gunners at Paschen-  
daele.)





### TO THE ONE LITTLE GIRL WHO CARES

You are never out of my mind sweetheart,

You are never out of my mind,  
Wherever I go in the War land,

Whether fate be harsh, or kind,  
A man has his orders to follow,

So he cannot be free to go.  
But beyond the confines of the Army  
His thoughts have continual flow.

Away to the one little girl he loves  
Thro' the quivering lights and airs,  
And some of these days he is going back  
To the one little girl who cares.

You are never away from my dreams at all—  
And day-dreams are dreams that last—  
What were the words that you whispered low  
When I held your hands in the past?  
What were the words that you meant to say  
When I kissed you and clasped you tight?  
Would your heart beat faster I wonder, my love,  
If you lay in my arms tonight?

And I love you, sweet, for the promise you gave  
And the hope that each message bears—  
And some of these days I am coming again  
To the one little girl who cares:

I know there are chances we take, sweetheart,  
And it's cruel to think too long  
On the things that would happen to both of us  
If the chances we trust went wrong:  
But somehow I'm sure I will see your face  
In the light of a happier day,  
And you'll give me the kisses I've missed so long  
Since I've wandered so far away,

From all that made life what it ought to be.  
What a glory the old world wears  
To the happy man who is travelling back  
To his one little girl who cares.

France, July 6, 1917.



## CHURCH PARADE

They rounded us up for Church Parade  
And the Sky Pilot took us in tow,  
He said the Lord was on our side—  
And I guess he ought to know  
He quite het up to his discourse  
(Which wasn't what you'd call tame)  
An' I kind of feel for the Jerry Boys  
Who are playing a losing game.

There's quite a flock of these pilot birds  
That follows us round abouts,  
And I haven't a doubt but lots of them  
Are pretty decent scouts,  
There may be truth in the hot stuff  
What them Padres, at times, orate,  
But there aint no call for us common bucks  
To be singin' no Hymns of Hate.

Now, Church Parade is optional,  
But nary a Buck declines,  
For those that are left are Catholics  
A cleanin' up the lines,  
And when the Dogans do their stunts  
It's up to the Protestant League—

The Mormons, the Jew<sup>s</sup>, and the Gentiles,  
To do the extra fatigue.

So that's why I here a listenin'  
To what this Reverend can tell,  
How we're on the road to Heaven  
And Fritz on the road to Hell;  
And then we're shoutin' our War song  
We've sung so often before—  
About Onward you Christian Soldats  
A marchin' into the War.

Now, we've been up to the front lines  
And took our chances in Hell.  
And we haven't no love for the Kaiser  
And Krupp's and Co. as well;  
But tho' we are straffing the Kaiser's troops,  
It's only fair to state,  
We haven't much time upon either side  
To be singing Hymns of Hate.



## THE BUCKLE OF BRASS

Toward the end of the War while the Canadian Light Horse were lying near Houdain, intimation was given to the troops that the General would inspect on the following day. It was further stated that the Colonel wished every man to pay particular attention to shining the large buckle on the respirator which was worn by Cavalry men when not in use in a position across the back. It appeared that on recent inspections of other units the General had evinced his displeasure at finding that soldiers had neglected to shine this particular part of their equipment.

The word came down the lines at noon  
The General will be with us soon,  
He wishes to see you in Battle Array,  
So polish by night, and polish by day,  
And the Colonel cautions what-e'er you pass  
You do not neglect the buckle of brass  
On the back of your respirator.

We burnished our chains with all our might  
Till the clear blue steel was shining bright  
And made a raid on the squadron canteen



For dope to polish and savon to clean;  
We made each buckle to shine like glass  
And we did not neglect the buckle of brass  
On the back of our respirator.

The Officers hastened to one and all  
"Now take ye heed that whatever befall  
You must oil your rifles full bright and clear  
And shine each shell in your bandolier  
And tho' there be rain (as may hap, alas)  
Give a finishing touch to the buckle of brass  
On the back of your respirator."

We groomed our horses with extra care  
With a kerosene rag we smoothed their hair:  
We blackened the hooves of our loved chevaux  
And combed their manes and tails just so.  
We were soldats all of the premier classe  
So we rubbed encore on the buckle of brass  
On the back of our respirator.

The word came down the lines once more  
This time 'twas a Sergeant the word that bore,  
"Let your saddles be polished, as never yet  
Let your bridles be glist'ning and free from sweat,  
And the Colonel is anxious and lays much stress  
On the Buckle ye shine both more and less  
On the back of your respirator."

So our saddle-blankets were brushed and aired  
(The saints bear witness no toil was spared)  
We folded them neat in the cavalry way  
And we polished by night and polished by day...  
Then we covered them well on the orchard grass  
Lest the night air tarnish the buckle of brass!  
On the back of our respirators.

The morning came and with early light  
We sped to stables with all our might.  
On the silky hides we lavished care  
And breathed soft words on the morning air,  
Then to our own "Manger" we hastened en-masse  
With a passing touch to the buckle of brass  
On the back of our respirators.

The trumpet's blare on the silence broke  
On the back of each saddle was rolled each cloak  
Our gun buckets glistened full bright and sheen,  
And the steel of our sword blades was blue and  
keen,

---

Our stirrups gleamed in the morning sun,  
And we saw that the buckle was not undone  
On the back of our respirators.

Our saddles were placed and our girths made tight  
And we rode from camp in the early light,  
Our limbers followed along behind

Soaked in whale-oil until they shined.  
The headquarters troop came by at a trot  
And the quartermaster was flustered and hot  
For the adjutant said as he saw them pass  
"Have you given full care to the buckle of brass  
On the back of your respirator?"

The colonel sat at the cross-roads high  
And eyed each trooper as we rode by.  
He saw how each Strathcona boot was laced  
He noted each Stetson was properly placed;  
As each squadron swung by the ville Grande Place  
He noted each back with the buckle of brass  
On the back of the respirator.

Now day of Parade—after all the strain  
On the back of it all came the jeesly rain;  
As we clattered down from Mont St. Eloi  
There was much of gloom and little of joy;  
The sergeants glowered at each man and said  
"Silence there, you are on parade,  
None of your lip and none of your gas,  
And don't forget the buckle of brass  
On the back of your respirator."

To the field of parade did each squadron file  
And took up its place in the Army style  
The heavy wagons to place they drew,



The limbers rolled up and the mess carts too,  
Each trooper sat like a statue dumb  
Wondering when in Hell will the General come?  
The tin-helmet swung at his shoulder strap  
Ran rain to his tunic and rain to his lap,  
The horses miserably paw'd the grass  
And rain ran down on the buckles of brass  
On the back of the respirators.

Now Glory be, there's a sudden stir  
The word comes quickly "He's coming, sir."  
The Colonel stiffens, the reg'ment "SHUNS."  
And down from each saddle the cold rain runs,  
The sedan of the General rolls to a halt  
Out steps the General dry to a fault!  
Un Petit drapeau at the side of his boot  
And the General stands to receive our salute.  
"Draw Swords" and each squadron swings brave-  
ly in sight.

Each sword held erect, and each eye to the right  
And each trooper feels as his back has been turned  
The eye of the General steadily burned  
Noting all his deficiency, poise, and demeanor,  
All his equipment so thoroughly clean  
But full concentrated alack and alas  
On that now hoodooed nightmare, the Buckle of  
brass  
On the back of the respirator.

Now swords were returned and troops galloped  
on

Over hurdles and ditches they sprang and were  
gone,

Over wide stretch of meadows they rode as in  
chase .

Fill again on Parade ground they dropped into  
place

And each trooper thought having mind but to this  
I wonder if there can be aught that's amiss

With that damnable buckle that ought to be bright  
That looms up so plain in the General's sight

On the back of my respirator?

And still in each saddle each trooper sat cold  
And the mud on his leather was sad to behold  
And he hoped in his heart that the Brass Hat would  
say

'The Parade is called off for the rest of the day!'

Oh, could we but sink in some secret crevasse

To be lost out of sight with that buckle of brass!

On the back of our respirator.

The rain drizzled cold as it can do in France  
And the Colonel gave order the regiment advance.  
For the General wished that the show might encore  
So the squadrons drew swords, and saluted once  
more

Each troop-leader thinking as by he did pass  
The General's displeased with the Buckle of Brass  
On the back of our blankety-blankety-blank-  
blankety respirators!

Now over the fields they manoevered in haste  
And their previous gallop again they retraced.  
Each horse on its mettle, each man all alert  
And all the equipment well smothered in dirt,  
Till at last they drew up knee to knee, trace to trace  
And looked for a smile on the General's face,  
Each thought "Can it be that our chance we've let  
pass

And we can't curry favor with buckles of brass  
On the back of our respirators?"


Shrilled the whistle that bade 'prepare',  
Troop leaders raised their hands in air  
Horses stood fast as if spell-bound  
And troopers seized rifle and came to ground  
Thinking all admonition was nothing but gas,  
There will be no comment on the buckles of brass  
On the back of our respirators.

Now the General came to each troop in turn  
And nothing of fault could he discern  
Tho' he peeped in each trooper's haversack,  
And unfastened bandolier flaps at the back,

And squinted down gunbarrels and unslid bolts,  
And prob'd in the works of 45 Colts,  
And undid nose-bags securely tied,  
And saddle-wallets on either side.  
And felt men's tunics in order to see  
If first-aid dressings were where they should be  
And troopers, erect with jaws held square,  
Could feel the General fingerin' there  
At the back of their respirators.

O Gawd be thanked, he is thro' at last,  
An' the order among the troops was passed  
All to mount and to ride again  
And we hit the highroad back to Houdain,  
O, the regiment's ignorance may be crass  
But the General's pleased with the buckle of brass  
On the back of our respirators.

The word came down the lines next day  
The Colonel has some words to say,  
The Gen'ral's remarks to him were plain  
He was pleased with the troops and wouldn't  
complain,  
Only this one fault he would caution, alas—  
There was some neglect of the buckles of brass  
On the back of the respirators.



O, echo a cheer for La Belle France  
An' a cheer for the squadrons three—Bon chance  
An' a cheer for our General, give once more  
Who could notice this after four years' war,  
That troops might have mettle and yet o'er pass  
The baser metals of tarnished brass  
On the back of the respirators.





## FROM WAR LETTERS

Cher Docteur:

To me eet ees plaisair I'm sure  
To relate I am well, so I cannot be cure,  
An' at Noel, I hope you are verree same way,  
W'en I'm wishin' ma frien' all de same, "bon  
sante."

Of course, I am missin' dat fros' and dat snow,  
An' longin' sometam for dat 40 below,  
But I don' come an' sit by de stove now toute  
suite  
Or I'm gettin' de chillblain all over my feet.

Eet isn't long letter I sen' you dis tam,  
For I'm readin' your speech to les docteurs, by  
dam.

I peety de whole of dose medical men,  
But I'm readin' eet over an' over again.

Excuser moi, for my letter ees short—  
But I want to get on wit' your sapre report,  
Geeve all my regard to my former confrere,  
On de Bureau de Sante, dis tam of de year.

I am sure we are going to win the war because  
lately we have been getting "Parritch" for break-  
fast. What dae ye ken aboot that? Hoch der  
Haig!

France, December 4, 1916.

France, July 16, 1917.

Still we are eating the government grub, with  
infinite pains and relish,  
And things we find in our old mess-tub are some-  
times strange to our (hic) bellish.  
Some of the boys that thrive on beer, could dine on  
Egyptian mummies,  
But we get an appetite over here, that's hard on the  
Tommies' tummies.  
'Bully bif' and Macconachie Hash and Slumgullions  
called in question,  
And tea that the Indies sent to smash our health  
with the Indy jestion.  
It's nice to be soldiering out in France, on the road  
to the Great Eternal  
(For those who sit on the seat of hostilities, and  
dine at the mess of a Colonel).  
Nevertheless, without despair, I've eaten my grub  
and I've done my share,  
I've eaten my share, and I've done my bit and I  
won't be pceved when it's time to quit.


Bethmann-Hollweg, we notice is now out of  
bounds — or rather out of business. Good-bye  
Beth, we're glad you go. It's a chancy job in the  
Chancellor show. You hated us all and we under-  
stood, so nobody thinks you are gone for good!

## SOMEWHERE

Behind the lines, somewhere in France,  
We're waiting for the great advance,  
And doing things, from day to day,  
To help us on our weary way.  
You'd be surprised, you would, in fact,  
To find our squadron so intact,  
Despite the German shells and mines  
(It's often dull behind the lines)  
Somewhere in France.

Behind the lines in Belgium, too,  
You still might find us, quite a few  
Still rusticating on the farms  
Or lying idly on our arms.  
And watching all our sleek chevaux  
(Our King and Country need us so).  
Of Uhlans here we see no signs,  
It's stagnant, quite, behind the lines  
Somewhere in Belgium.

We used to have some idle hopes  
Of charging down the Rhineland slopes,  
And doing Cossack posts and stunts  
That we have practised more than once.



But, nimble troopers, as we were,  
We could but stay behind and swear,  
And wish to brave the shots and stanches,  
And "foot-slog" in to man the trenches  
Somewhere in Front.

But still we're guarding farms and things  
(It's not our fault, or even Byng's)  
This here patrolling round the farms  
Is meant for Frenchy Gens d'Armes,  
And watching roads in open view  
Lest some slim Fritzie should creep through  
Pcor'Devil! If he hits our rounds,  
(Estaminets are out of bounds)  
Somewhere in Flanders.

The Infantry are doing splendid,  
But, God send, ere the war be ended,  
They need our Cavalry that's mounted  
(If our old steeds are still accounted)  
We'll amble in, our pace no greater,  
Should they require us some years later,  
And stall our horses out of malice  
In Kaiser Wilhelm's Potsdam Palace  
Somewhere in Deutschland.

France, 12-2-17.



## DAMES OF FRANCE

"The Dames of France are fond and free  
And Flemish lips are willing".

—Old Song.

(Suggested by queries made to Mr. Will R. Bird by former Canadian Soldiers as to former haunts and habitues of the old-occupied territory".)

Oh, do you mind of Stout Marie  
Who dwelt near Bailleul Ville?  
She had as many buxon charms  
As man could wish to feel,  
The only fault with Sweet Marie  
Her weakness lay in spots,  
As when she mucked about the byres  
With dung on her sabots.

Or have you thought of fair Eloise  
At Madam Laundry's place  
Who combed her hair three times a day  
But seldom washed her face?

She does not love you any more  
For needless 'tis to say.  
She has filles and garcons three or four  
And another on the way.

Or Rosie with the well rouged cheek?  
You bade her au revoir  
She added cuss words every week  
To her long repertoire  
She comes no more on promenade  
Nor does she longer roam.  
She's married to her own chasseur  
And wags her tongue at home.

Or, have you news of dark Nannette  
With coal black eyes aglow?  
Has she left that estaminet  
We drank in long ago?  
Can still she mix the grenadine  
Or pass the foaming beer?  
And has she kept each collar badge  
She claimed for souvenir?

Have you been by the magazin  
Old Madame Beauvrie's place  
Where young mam'selle from Armentiers  
Sold us whole yards of lace?

They loved us for the francs we spent  
And smiled each time we came  
"Après la guerre" finis—mes braves  
Dis place ees not de same."

And have you been to Divion  
(And how do folks behave)  
An' were you at the Barber Shop  
Where madam gives the shave?  
Does she still leave her half-dressed brats  
Meand'ring round the place  
While she—with "munjee" in her mouth  
Slaps lather on your face?

Oh, Comrade Bird, Oh, Comrade Bird  
Who knows the War Zone well,  
How are the petite demoiselles  
We knew at old Cassel?  
And have you been by Mont des Chats  
To see those kitties there  
Who once were fresh and fair to see  
But now are only fair?

Oh, la! la! Oh, la! la! la!  
Fair demoiselles we knew!  
There are no dames in Canada  
Are quite the same as you.

### NIGHTS THAT WE REMEMBER

The Star Shells lit the firing line  
We heard the hardware screech and whine,  
And cold sweat trickled down our spine  
On nights that we remember.

The calm old moon looked down and smiled  
She saw the well-worn shovels piled  
And out of the trenches the Cavalry filed  
On nights that we remember.

"Ware Wire" men, and "Close up tight"  
"Shell hole here," and "keep to the right,"  
Watch for the guide tape on darkest night—  
Such nights as we remember.

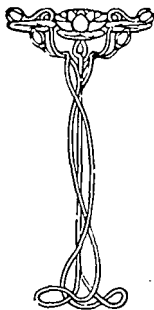
Down the duckboards and darkened way  
We floundered on till dawn of day,  
And all were ready to hit the hay  
After nights that we remember.

Too tired to think, and with brains grown numb  
We had one desire that we wished would come—  
We wished that the Sergeant would bring our run  
After nights that we remember.



In lousy dug-outs we laid us down,  
To us the war held little renown,  
But a wished for warmth, that our cares may drown  
After nights that we remember.

Now War is a nightmare (Thank God) that's gone,  
But it helped us go forward from Arras to Bonn—  
The little RUM RATION that helped us on  
After nights that we remember.



**BOYS, LOOK AT US NOW!**

(February 11, 1932)

When we wanted to join, to go abroad  
The Major looked at us kind of odd,  
He thought we were kind of a roughneck crew,  
But he'd lick us in shape in a year or two  
And boys, look at us now.

They gave us lectures on warfare based,  
On the way the Boers on the Veldt were chased,  
We drank it in with a deal of lore  
For we were not versed in the ways of war  
But boys, look at us now.

O, didn't we drill and didn't we shoot  
And do a helluva lot to boot  
And didn't we ride our old chevaux  
Down where the Riviere Jacques Cartier flows—  
And boys, look at us now.

We all were afraid they would end la guerre  
Before we got over to Anglaterre,  
But in order to quench our thirst for blood  
They let us wallow in Wiltshire mud  
And boys, look at us now.

Now, this is the day we celebrate  
For they took us abroad on this very date.  
We were some brave bunch when they took us  
there,


And dumped us over at St. Lazaire  
But boys, look at us now.

Now, the Kaiser knew that his fate was met  
Tho' the war might hang on for some years yet,  
And it gave him a pain in his tummy-tum-tum  
When they brought him word the Canucks had  
come

But boys, look at us now.

The fireworks started with gas galore  
Which we were not taught was a feature of war.  
To our stunts we added a gas parade  
And gas-masks came to the whole Brigade  
So boys, look at us now.

Then they taught us our methods were obsolete—  
That men fought better upon their feet  
That the days men fought upon horses' backs  
Were the days of the Knights and the Battle-axe.  
So boys, look at us now.



We learned to footslog and gravel crush,  
We learned to shovel in sludge and slush,  
We learned to paddle in trenches wet,  
And we learned a lot we would like to forget  
For boys, look at us now.

They taught us to scout (ere we went o'er seas,)     .  
Such as finding our way by the bark on trees,  
But they told us to ditch three-fourths of our loads  
And you must not trot on the Flanders' Roads  
Oh boys! Pity us now!

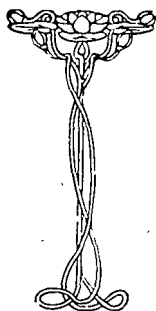
We visited all the estaminet rounds,  
Till they placed the estaminets out of bounds  
Then we found that Sheridan's views were right  
And that war was Hell by a good Damsite.  
For boys, look at us now.

Oh, you old duffers that listen to me,  
You had your fill of a fight o'er sea,  
You had your chance to do or die  
And now you are back to Canada Dry.  
And boys, look at us now.

Some of your belts are not so slack,  
Some are stiffened and kinked in the back.  
Some are balder than what they were,  
But all have a look of Devil-May-Care.  
Boys, look at us now.

We'll meet again, and in years to come  
And few will answer when most are dumb.  
Till the last old gaffer goes doddering by,  
And says with a tear in his vacant eye  
"Oh boys, look at us now!"

You may not think it to look at me  
I'm not so young as I used to be  
But I served in France with the troops eftsoons,  
And we were some bunch in the Old Dragoons  
But boys—look at US now!



## THE OLD GUARD

We've answered the roll call, Sergeant  
And some of the troops are here  
But always the number at roll-call  
Is lessening year by year,  
Still we draw in for a hand-shake  
Still we rise up for a toast—  
But comrades who journeyed ahead, boys  
Are those we remember the most.

Dark days of battle and scouting  
Cold days of danger and gloom  
Come to us all for a moment  
To melt in the lights of the room,  
Over each glass and decanter  
We linger 'till glimmering dawn  
And into our group come the faces—  
The faces of men that are gone.

Comrades of "Bivvy" and billet  
(Some of the best we'd made,)  
Mates who were with us on picquet  
And numbered with us on parade.

All the patrols have gone foward.

Do the connecting Files show?

Yes, for we follow in order

Down thro' the years as we go.

You that have ridden beside us,

~~You~~ who have joined in our song

Tho' we are gathered in mufti,

We know where your heart must belong  
Along with the columns of khaki

Your thoughts glide to years long sped.

We must keep to the ranks till ordered

To join with the comrades ahead.

You mind how we flocked to the Arm'ries

Each one with a keenness to 'list,

But then we were only a rabble

Whatever our hopes might insist.

By "Swede-torture"—aye and by rouse-march,

By things that we couldn't escape,

They brought us to thinking as Soldiers

And hammered a squadron to shape.

But then we were strange to each other

As strange as we were to the war.

'Till the "bivvy", the trench and the billet

Had fostered an 'esprit de corps'.

We grouched in the slack-time behind lines  
We marched in the mud and the rain  
We endured (and enjoyed) and tonight, boys  
We live it all over again.

We weren't so strong on salute, boys  
Perhaps we were somewhat a mob,  
But the rough-necks that Canada sent there  
Were able to handle the job.  
We've never been sorry we answered  
When the Motherland gave us the call  
And—we grew to respect and to honor  
The men who went thro' with it all.

There's some out of touch with the column  
(God knows where the stragglers may be)  
But pass the word on to close up there  
(Tho' nothing ahead can we see)  
We've trust in the Unseen that guides us  
We still have a forced-march to do,  
And the Young Guards will cheer, in the passing  
The Old Guards that pass in review.

February 11, 1932.



## COMRADES OF THE WAR YEARS

Ye comrades of the War years  
Who sleep so sound and still,  
The sun is on the crosses,  
And the Lark is on the hill,  
We still have bitter memories  
Of nights of rain or frost,  
But ye left the battle early,  
Ere we counted all the cost.

The war graves of our soldiers  
They lie on every hand,  
But filled are now the trenches  
And tilled again the land.  
They fed us high on Glory  
That lures men on to war,  
And now we tread the home trails  
That you may tread no more.

We tread again the home trails  
The trails that once ye knew,  
And now no glory waits us  
But only tasks to do,  
And still new conflicts face us  
And still we "carry on"  
But we must face the twilight  
And you left in the dawn.



Oh, cheery were ye comrades  
At all the tasks they set:  
Men sang and joked while marching  
In fog, and cold and wet,  
Now I would sing a chanson  
To those whose tasks are done,  
For life thro' clouds and shadow  
Holds little glints of sun.

Ye dead that lie in Flanders  
Your graves are marked with care  
And the poppies blaze about ye  
And the lark is high in air.  
And home—where ye had longed for  
New forces walk the street  
Dejected ones—old comrades  
Who now must face defeat.

They rallied to the roll call  
Young men, and staunch and true  
"Your King and Country need you,"  
Was what was said to you.  
They mustered in their manhood  
They served their country well  
But we forget the living  
And honor those who fell.

---

We'll take the torch ye threw us  
And still will hold it high,  
To keep it brightly burning  
Lest faith and freedom die,  
We'll still hold fast to ideals  
That cling to Britain's crown;  
But can we see old comrades  
About us here go down?

Old faces come about us  
In silence of the night  
Old forms that we remember  
Were with us in the fight,  
But the men with haggard faces  
We meet with every day,  
Are the ones who bring us anguish  
That will not pass away.



